

Suturing the Action to the Word: Shakespearean Enunciation and Cinema's "Reality-Effect" in Shakespeare in Love and Anonymous

Both *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) and *Anonymous* (2011) show the author of the Shakespearean canon ostentatiously writing the name "William Shakespeare." This inscription of authorship, in the first of these films, is interpreted by Jane E. Kingsley-Smith as an atavistic riposte to Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author" that "evoke[s] a Romantic conception of authorship by privileging such scenes of writing" (159). *Anonymous*' Shakespearean signature (Figure 1) is much more problematic, however, because the author presented in this film is the Earl

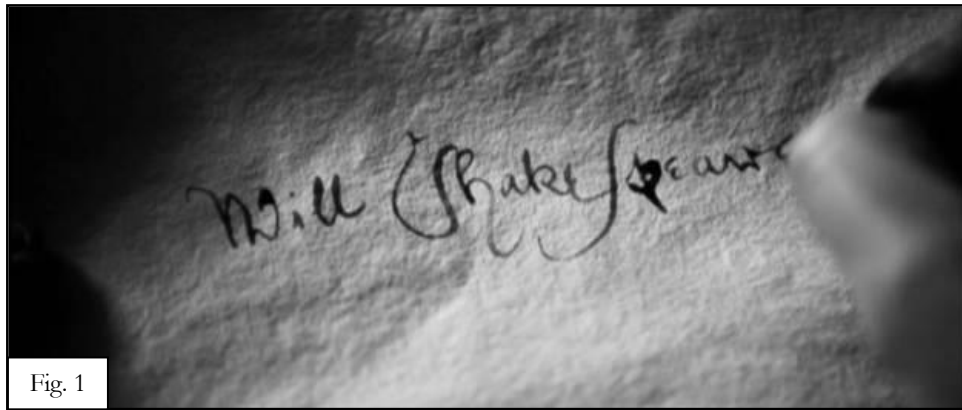


Fig. 1

of Oxford, a man who surrenders ownership of his canon to protect his political pretensions. Signing his work with the name of an illiterate and uncouth actor, the film's Oxford not only allegorizes the Barthesian author's death, in a manner similar to Kingsley-Smith's analysis of *Shakespeare in Love*, but also thematizes the contested nature of cinematic enunciation, one of film studies' central and unresolved epistemes (Bordwell, *Narration* 21-26; Metz, "Story/Discourse"). This presentation of authorship obfuscates the ideological processes involved in film's own construction, dramatizing the creative act only to mythologize it. I argue that contrasting presentations of foregrounded authorship in *Anonymous* and *Shakespeare in Love* allegorize contested theories inherent to all cinema, allowing adaptation studies privileged comparative conditions to clarify and test unresolved issues at the heart of film studies.

The theoretical premises upon which I base this argument are derived from Jean-Louis Baudry's understanding of realist film, within the Marxist tradition of commodity fetishism, as a product that attempts to efface all traces of its own construction. This theory establishes first that almost all forms of editing and story-telling constitute a reality-effect that conceals cinema's inherent transformative work. These processes are intrinsically ideological since they create the impression of a seamless flowing of events in subjects¹ who are placed into a created, passive position that masquerades as a creative, transcendent position.

Only by revealing the transformative work of the cinematic apparatus can a knowledge effect that denounces ideology be achieved (Baudry 533-34).

This transformative work is potentially thematized within adaptation because of the foregrounding of the constructed nature of films adapted from acknowledged authorial sources. The way in which the presentation or elision of authorship impacts upon film's ideology is demonstrated by Christian Metz's understanding of Emile Benveniste's distinction between *discours* (discourse), the act of telling, and *histoire* (story), narration from a hidden source, which is roughly the distinction between third-person and first-person speech. This understanding highlights the post-structuralist conception of realist cinema's seamless, ideological, un-authored narrative, since "the traditional film is presented as story, and not as discourse. And yet it is discourse, ... but the basic characteristic of this kind of discourse, and the very principle of its effectiveness as discourse, is precisely that it obliterates all traces of the enunciation, and masquerades as story" (Metz, "Story/Discourse" 544).

However, within adaptations of the work of canonized authors the narrative discourse's status as articulation is explicit. If a film-text is foregrounded as an adaptation of a pre-known work then a significant element of its constructed-ness is therefore not obliterated. Narrative might therefore not seamlessly unfold, and *discours* might not masquerade as *histoire*, if the constructed nature of the adaptation's *discours* is foregrounded. As such, adaptation might reveal cinema's transformative work, fulfilling Baudry's argument that "its inscription, its manifestation as such ... would produce a knowledge effect, an actualisation of the work process, as denunciation of ideology" (534).

For Stephen Heath, however, the revelation of cinema's transformative work does not necessarily produce a knowledge effect. Instead, cinema always mediates between illusionism and revelation. His reworking of Baudry's argument contends that film's positioning of the subject is always threatened by certain inherent elements of cinema's mobility. Establishing shots, for example, by revealing unattributed viewpoints that do not seem to belong to anyone, let alone the subject, threaten to reveal the cinematic frame and its constructed nature, throwing the subject out of his or her transcendent position. The techniques of continuity editing resolve this grammatical threat to seamlessness, however, by cutting to shots that attribute the previous viewpoint to narrative and character elements within the film's diegesis (Heath 514). Cinema therefore always has the potential to reveal its constructed nature and demonstrate the subject's passivity, but overcomes this through continuity editing, a stitching over, or *suture*, of the potential cut in the subject's perceived creative mastery of what appears to seamlessly unfold before him or her.

Within foregrounded adaptations certain filmmaking techniques may operate, in a similar manner to how continuity editing *sutures* over the inherent threat of cinematic mobility, as ways to contain the subversive potential of presenting authorial enunciation.² Furthermore, containing this subversive potential might not simply be a suppression of the threat to ideology, but also a heightened example of how cinema masochistically exploits grammatical threats, such as the momentarily unattributed viewpoints of establishing shots, to ensure ideological

closure through the creation of pleasure. For Heath, this grammatical inconsistency within realist cinema's otherwise unproblematic *histoire*-like continuity is an important element both of how subjects derive pleasure from films, and of how ideology successfully operates. Heath contends that Baudry's explanation of how the cinematic apparatus ideologically positions subjects is insufficient because it does not explain the *pleasure* of being so positioned. He argues that cinema's grammatical inconsistencies are an almost paradoxical element of how

a film is not reducible to its "ideology" but is also the working over of that ideology in cinema, with the industry dependent on the pleasure of the operation. ... Film is the constant process of a phasing-in of vision, the pleasure of that process—movement and fixity and movement again, from fragment ... to totality (the jubilation of the final image). (514)

Subjects are positioned ideologically through their unconscious enjoyment of the threat to realist grammar, the temporary revelation that they are merely passive subjects, and its subsequent, cathartic resolution.

Richard Allen relates this process to Freud's *fort/da* game, in which the infant masochistically ritualizes separation from the mother by allegorically re-playing the scenario through repeatedly casting away a bobbin with the cry of "gone" (*fort*) and winding it back up, "here" (*da*). The child thereby claims limited agency over that which is beyond genuine control (Allen 34-35). The momentary revelation of cinema's reality-effect and its ideological and pleasure-inducing subsequent disavowal is, for Heath and Allen, inherent to all realist cinema. It is my contention, however, that the revelation and cathartic resolution of the grammatical disruption inherent in presenting and translating foregrounded authorial enunciation in adaptation not only functions as another enunciative trace similar to the traces left by the director through continuity editing, but also further thematizes the *suture*.

The specific significance, in relation to adaptation, of thematizing these ideological issues relates to competing ideas about self-reflexivity and metadrama. Shakespearean cinema's self-reflexivity, praised by many critics as the medium's principle way to manipulate and explore the plays' pluralistic themes and overcome realist film's monolithic interpretations (Brown; Holderness; Rasmus; Rothwell), might actually participate in film's ideological *suture*. For Heath, cinematic metadrama is an inherent element of how the ritual of *suture* produces pleasure in subjects because "the drama of vision becomes a constant reflexive fascination *in* films" (514). Just as with the *fort/da* game, the deferred pleasure of regaining an imagined mastery is so worth the prior temporary recognition of passivity that realist cinema cannot help but inscribe such pleasures into its narratives. I understand adaptation's masochistic presentation and subsequent disavowal of enunciation, within Heath's terms, as "a constant reflexive fascination *in* films" (514), with "the industry dependent on the pleasure of the operation" (514). Shakespearean self-reflexivity, far from being the key to transcending realist cinema's perceived fixing of the plays' inherent pluralism, is merely another level of narrativizing this conservative *suture*.³

Before turning to how Shakespearean adaptation negotiates and thematizes these premises, however, it is necessary to outline the two principle reasons why existing adaptation studies do not locate authorial enunciation within the ideological context in which post-structuralist film theory conceives cinematic enunciation. This is important not only in terms of understanding the epistemological foundations of existing studies, but also in terms of establishing how such studies complete the suturing hermeneutic inherent in the presentation and cathartic resolution of translating foregrounded authorial enunciation in adaptations. These academic interpretations that, like adaptations themselves, foreground authorial enunciation and simultaneously disavow the transgressive potential of this foregrounding, can be seen as part of an intellectual regime that completes adaptation's conservative masochism. The reasons why existing studies have not discussed the masochistic aspect of foregrounded authorial enunciation are located within the discursive histories of both film studies and literary studies, and in the ideological and pleasure-inducing nature of this masochism.

First, the specific history of film studies has led primarily to a focus on the constructive impact of auteurs/directors rather than authors/script-writers, and on film-makers' visual, rather than verbal, transformative manipulations.⁴ Second, the influence of Barthes's "Death of the Author" has led to quite specific interpretations of the influence of authorial enunciation, particularly within literary studies. Barthes approaches authorship from a position very different to Benveniste's, as an attempt to efface the author's impact on textual interpretation rather than as an attempt to understand the ideological effect of the author's articulative status. Consequently, with both theorists discussing the work of Balzac, Barthes asks, "Who is speaking thus?" (125), answering, "[w]e shall never know, for the good reason that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost" (125). Benveniste's answer to the same question, on the other hand, is "there is no longer even a narrator. ... No one speaks here; events seem to tell themselves" (241). Both theorists posit an authorial absence, but Barthes argues for this absence in order to reclaim interpretative pluralism, whereas Benveniste claims that this absence is predicated upon a myth of interpretative pluralism from an ideologically concealed author. Barthes does not seek to understand the ideological impact of presenting or concealing authorial enunciation, as Benveniste does, because his author is always already "dead," and enunciative traces are merely critical attempts to "impose a limit on [... a] text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing" (Barthes 128-29).

It is not only striking that two structuralist/post-structuralist writers could conceive of authorial enunciation so differently, but also significant, given subsequent discursive developments, that little attention has been paid to these differences.⁵ This under-theorization is particularly significant within studies of those films in which authors are themselves characters, because this is where the contested authorial absence inherent to both Barthes and Benveniste is most clearly thematized. Kingsley-Smith, for example, argues that *Shakespeare in Love* "respond[s] to an authorial absence *created* by adaptation ... enacting a comic ritual

in which the death of the Author is threatened but finally averted” (158, original emphasis). Kingsley-Smith therefore interprets the film’s Shakespeare “writing his name over and over again—a joke that Barthes might have appreciated” (161) as the triumph of the Barthesian author’s return (159).

Applying Barthes’s understanding of authorship to *Shakespeare in Love* does allow for a critique of *the film’s* conservatism, explaining how “the author emerges triumphant, more formidable after its encounter with the giant-killers of post-structuralism” (Kingsley-Smith 162).⁶ What it does not do is question what these presentations of authorship mean in terms of *film’s* enunciative qualities, and the degree to which such depictions problematize cinema’s conventional seamlessness. Authorship is understood only within the parameters of challenging authorial intention, rather than as a heightened example of cinema’s inherent, and ideologically problematic, enunciative traces. The extent to which the different interpretations of Barthes and Benveniste meet within *Shakespeare in Love* is demonstrated by Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack’s argument that “the film continually reminds us that we are witnessing the construction of narrative” (155), which they interpret as evidence for a conservative presentation of pre-Barthesian, Romantic authorship. Applying Benveniste’s understanding of authorship could, however, suggest that this reminder might be potentially transgressive, with the thematization of “the construction of narrative” a threat to the illusionism of cinematic seamlessness.

The specific link between un-authored Benvenistene seamlessness, “events [that] seem to tell themselves” (Benveniste 241), and Barthes’s alternate authorial absence is demonstrated by Kingsley-Smith’s argument that “by suggesting that what has been already spoken and written finds its way unconsciously into Shakespeare’s text, the film alludes to theories of intertextuality that might challenge its whole conception of the author. Barthes’s ... authorial absence is predicated upon the theory of intertextuality” (161). Privileging Barthes’s over Benveniste’s understanding of authorial absence here means interpreting the film’s translation of authored *discours* into seamless *histoire* as an atavistic challenge to the author’s death, rather than as the ideological disavowal of his presence.

Richard Burt interprets the montage of Will and Viola’s impromptu creation of lines of dialogue while in bed together, which then appear as the text of *Romeo and Juliet* in dress rehearsals for the play’s performance, within this Barthesian context. The scene’s potential translation of *histoire* (conversation that seamlessly unfolds between two lovers) into *discours* (a foregrounded piece of writing) is thereby understood, not in the context of cinema’s ideological transformative work, but “as an effect which naturalizes the film’s character as the historical truth of the work’s genesis” (Burt 220).

It is revealing, in fact, that the specific nature of this authorial act resides in a Barthesian form of intertextuality that relies on “real,” seamlessly shown events rather than on a prior act of authorship. Kingsley-Smith notes that no mention is ever made, within the film, of Shakespeare culling his plots from anything that has been previously written (161). In the Benvenistene context this means that the montage depicting the creation of *Romeo and Juliet’s* text shows *histoire* shaped into *discours*, but not *discours* reworked as another form of *discours*. From this

perspective, the transformation of seamless *histoire* into authored *discours* reinforces cinema's ideological illusionism and contains the potential transgression of foregrounding the created nature of *discours*. Presenting the manipulation of one form of *discours* into another would not have the same ideological effect. Kingsley-Smith, however, states that the film's "disregard for the book is dictated by the visual demands of cinema, or perhaps by the power struggle between text and image that goes on in Shakespeare films" (161). She then problematizes this interpretation, by contrasting the way in which Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* (1991) dramatizes books (161-62), without providing an alternate account (such as favoring Benveniste's conception of authorship) for *Shakespeare in Love*'s privileging of intertextuality between people over intertextuality between texts. Depicting Shakespeare taking ideas from a book, a site of authored *discours*, as opposed to an "everyday" site in which "events seem to tell themselves" (Benveniste 241), would present an authored account of cinema much more transgressive than a diegetic world in which even the most foregrounded authorship is initiated in a seamless unfolding.⁷

This Barthesian dominance of the critical discourse perhaps explains the focus on Shakespeare's authorial "return" in *Shakespeare in Love*. It may be telling, for example, that Burt, discussing this return in the context of the authorship controversy between Stratfordians and Oxfordians, writes, "[t]hrough an Oxfordian website set up a page entitled 'Shakespeare in Love: the True Story,' I doubt that we can expect a film entitled *Oxford in Love* to be released anytime in the near future" (222). Titling a film thus would indeed emphasize the old Stratfordian/Oxfordian debate, and constitute a lapse into pre-Barthesian Romanticism not dissimilar to that worked into *Shakespeare in Love*. Titling the film *Anonymous*, however, suggests a more interesting exploration of authorship, and one that directly allegorizes cinema's inherent unauthored seamlessness, even in a film that thematizes authorship.

Anonymous is a film in which the contested identity of the author overwrites Shakespeare's enunciation while simultaneously foregrounding an alternate authorial articulation. Shakespeare himself may be obliterated, but authorship is thematized. Not only is the plays' scripted nature foregrounded, but the writing process is fetishized. These fetishizations serve to raise the issue of authorship only to mythologize it, allegorizing the masochistic *fort/da*-like dialectic of presenting and then disavowing cinematic enunciation. Oxford's inscription of Shakespeare's name onto his plays is the film's epitome of this mythologization of enunciation. As I discussed above, *Shakespeare in Love* also showed the author writing the name "William Shakespeare," a presentation interpreted by Kingsley-Smith as "a joke that Barthes might have appreciated" (161), and in the context of the film's "encounter with the giant-killers of post-structuralism" (162), by which she means Barthes. In *Anonymous* this act of writing has a more apt Benvenistene connotation, however. Yes, as Barthes argued, with this signature the film presents "that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost" (105). It also presents, however, Benveniste's premise that "[n]o one speaks here; events seem to tell themselves" (241), since the foregrounding of authorial enunciation inherent in a man writing the two words

“William Shakespeare” is simultaneously disavowed by the film’s claim that not only were the plays written by a man with another name, but that the plays’ true author could never be revealed. Mythologizing the plays’ origins in this way obfuscates the status of authorial enunciation in film as well as in *the* film, making a virtue out of the potentially transgressive nature of obliquely addressing cinema’s constructed nature.

The paradoxical nature of these signatures, simultaneously valorizations of Romantic authorship, in a Barthesian context, and traces of transformative work, in a Benvenistene context, aptly demonstrates the importance of academic traditions to understandings of adaptation’s ideological possibilities. Derrida’s approach to the written signature echoes the paradox. The signature not only “implies the empirical nonpresence of the signer,”⁸ a situation that requires, in order to tether the signature to its source, “the absolute singularity of a signature-event and a signature-form: the pure reproducibility of a pure event” (20). It also requires that “to be readable ... it must be able to be detached from the present and singular *intention* of its production” (Derrida 20, my emphasis). This decoupling of the written expression of subjectivity from a presumed authorial intention is strikingly reminiscent of Barthes’s rejection of the knowability and relevance of these intentions.

It is also echoed by Dudley Andrew’s and André Bazin’s analyses of written enunciative traces in film adaptations. Andrew interprets Zola’s signature at the beginning of Jean Renoir’s *La Bête humaine* (1938) as “authentic and authenticating Emile Zola addresses us through this film” (Andrew, *Mists of Regret* 307). Andrew presumes that the *auteur*-ial intention behind this authentication is an attempt to link foreknowledge of the novel’s prophecies with the pessimistic social context at the time of the adaptation, arguing that Zola’s “visage wants to hover over the movie, spelling doom for its characters, and for the Third Republic that received its tainted start at the close of the novel” (Andrew, *Mists of Regret* 307). Andrew interprets neither foreknowledge of the film’s conclusion, nor the foregrounding of enunciative construction inherent in the presentation of Zola’s signature, as traces of the film’s transformative work. Authored *discours* is translated into seamless *histoire* despite the presentation of authored enunciation in textual form.

Bazin analyzes the written presentation of the diary in Robert Bresson’s adaptation of Georges Bernanos’s *Journal d’un curé de campagne* in a similar manner. He argues that Bresson not only renders the curé’s diary in written form because “the mental and emotional impact of a line that is merely read is very different from that of a spoken line” (128), so that the film therefore “includes all that the novel has to offer plus, in addition, its refraction in the cinema” (143), but also claims, in a pre-Barthesian manner, that “acknowledgement for [the film’s artistic pleasure] must go to the genius of Bernanos” (143). Kingsley-Smith, Andrew, Bazin and even Derrida all apply a loosely Barthesian interpretation to the signature, examining the writer’s/director’s *intentions*, rather than the ways in which the signature foregrounds the transformative work of enunciation.

Anonymous’ Shakespearean signature allegorizes these paradoxes. Instead of *Shakespeare in Love*’s “effect which naturalizes the film’s character as the historical

truth of the work's genesis" (Burt 220), or *La Bête humaine*'s "authentic and authenticating" (Andrew, *Mists of Regret* 307) articulation, *Anonymous* presents the Shakespearean signature as a performative lie, as the *suturing* manifestation of the transformative work inherent in the foregrounding of authorial enunciation.

The film also raises its conception of this enunciation to a pathological, almost de-humanized level. When his wife demands to know whether he is writing again, Oxford equates his work with madness or demonic possession. This account of authorship mystifies the writing of Shakespeare's plays into a process that only a superhuman or an *idiot savant* could execute, foregrounding a mythic conception of authorship while simultaneously denying the true author.

That the film's plays are the written, sole *discours*-like possession of this mythologized author, rather than the collaborative creation of a playwright and acting troupe, is demonstrated by the way that Ben Jonson, entrusted custodian of Oxford's manuscripts, buries them under the Rose Theatre's stage when pursued by Robert Cecil's henchmen. Although these soldiers burn the theater down Jonson returns to uncover the texts from a sturdy box, lovingly handling their

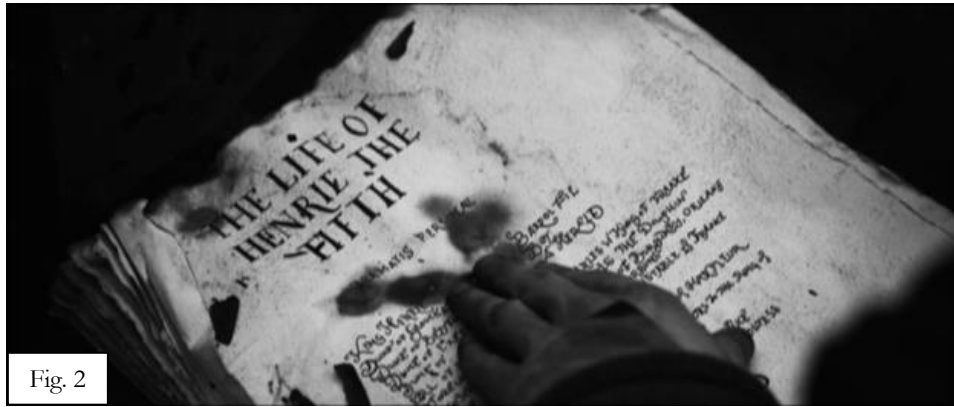


Fig. 2

slightly charred pages. (Fig.2) Authorial enunciation is thereby simultaneously fetishized and disavowed. Just as Heath argued that "the drama of vision becomes a constant reflexive fascination *in* films" (514), so too Oxford's charred manuscripts are part of the reflexive fascination of the drama of authorship. They are presented as the fragile fonts of originality and genius narrowly saved from oblivion within a medium in which authorship must be mythologized so that it can be simultaneously exhibited and disavowed.

As with *Shakespeare in Love*, *Anonymous* seamlessly translates elements of the plays into "real" events. Narrativizing moments from Shakespeare's plays into events from Oxford's life is one way in which writing is disavowed into that which seamlessly unfolds, as though it simply happened. The young Oxford's reaction to being spied upon, for example, is to stab blindly through a curtain. *Hamlet*'s closet scene is thereby turned into *histoire*, story, third-person narration, which passive subjects might appear to seamlessly produce before their own eyes, rather than as *discours*, a partial, foregrounded constructed piece of writing. The fact that many audience members will recognize the Shakespearean enunciation behind Oxford's reaction, however, foregrounds the very act of authorship that the scene seems to

obliterate. When the scene from *Hamlet* in which Polonius is slain in the same manner is later shown onstage, the film thematizes the masochistic interplay of presenting and disavowing this enunciation.

This dialectic between authored theater and seamless cinema is central to how the film negotiates *suture*. When *Henry V* is shown playing at the Rose, the Chorus' plea for the audience to "Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them" (Prologue 26) intermittently cuts to scenes of the Earl of Southampton and his men riding off to war, as though they were about to fight at Agincourt. The Chorus' anti-realist stress, to the theater's audience, that it is "your thoughts," with these first two words repeated, "your thoughts, that must deck our kings" (Prologue 28), is immediately followed by the work of computer-generated imagery and mobile camera, decking the kings without the need for subjects to employ their "imaginary forces" (Prologue 18). The constructed, collaborative, anti-realist theater,⁹ with the author looking on, almost like the Brechtian director at the side of the stage (Brecht, *Messingkauf Dialogues*), is here juxtaposed with seamless cinematic diegesis.

The theater's backstage apparatus is similarly revealed in a way that emphasizes the disavowal of the cinematic apparatus' transformative work. The film's opening scene shows a narrator on a contemporary proscenium stage outlining the Oxfordian theory of Shakespeare authorship. In the wings, actors who will play Jonson and Cecil's soldiers are shown preparing for their cues. They do not enter onto the boards however, but straight and seamlessly into the cinematic diegesis, *sutured* directly into an entirely different semiotic environment. The artificial status of these characters is foregrounded while they are shown within the confines of the theatrical world, but they slip effortlessly into unquestioned artifice once they enter the *histoire*-like realm of the purely cinematic.

In the same scene the theatrical mechanics of the dramatic effect of rain pouring upon the narrator are revealed. Later in the film there are further weather effects, but these are presented seamlessly, as the heavens' punctuations of key emotional moments. Rain begins to fall during the performance, on the Rose's outdoor stage, of *Hamlet's* "to be or not to be" (3.1.56) speech, showering the mood with a seemingly "natural" commentary beyond the will of any of the film's characters. At this moment even the Renaissance stage, hitherto presented as an anti-realist space, falls under the diegetic logic of a seamless coming together of word, action, and third-person metaphor.

Likewise, when the Earl of Essex leads his rebellion to ruination, Oxford is shown gazing through a window at his friend's failure, the camera zooming in to a close-up as rain begins to fall upon the panes with what would be, outside of cinema's artificial seamlessness, impeccable dramatic timing. This scene culminates with Oxford's nemesis, Robert Cecil, telling the film's protagonist that his childhood under the wardship of William Cecil was part of an elaborate scheme to manipulate Queen Elizabeth's succession. Robert Cecil's claim that the plan would have succeeded were it not for Oxford's neglect of his duties "all to write ... poetry," is followed by an ominous rumble of thunder. Cecil's dramatic pause and its seamless counterpointing imparted by the thunder again highlight the film's fetishization of writing.

Each of these weather effects, taken in isolation, would merely be part of cinema's overall reality-effect, an element of verisimilitude so conventionalized as to be unrecognizable. Juxtaposing, however, these effects' seamlessness with a prior foregrounding of their artificiality, in the preceding presentation of the contemporary theater, again demonstrates the masochistic dialectic of *suture*. That the last of these examples punctuates Cecil's melodramatic denunciation, "all to write ... poetry," underscores the link between the film's fetishization of authorship and its accompanying disavowal.

A Barthesian reading of these scenes would, as with the interpretations of *Shakespeare in Love* that this essay has analyzed, make a useful critique of the film's atavistic valorization of Romantic authorial genius. It would not, however, be able to understand the film in the context of cinema's inherent masochism and, given that the film's obfuscation of authorship directly thematizes the cinema's transformative work, does therefore not address that which is most ideological about *Anonymous*. As such, the Barthesian reading can only study film's content rather than what Heath calls its "specific signifying practice" (511). Given the way that adaptation, and *Anonymous* in particular, intertextually translates these specific signifying practices into narrative, it is imperative that analyses move beyond adaptation's Barthesian content, and toward adaptation's Benvenistene signifying practices. As Heath has argued, "to remain at the level of a content analysis in these terms is to fail to engage with the ideological *operation* of the film" (511, original emphasis). *Anonymous*' thematization of authorship acts as a disavowal of the issue of authorship, and it is Benveniste's understanding of enunciation that offers the means to reveal the ideological illusion.

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Notes

¹ Defining the film spectator as a "subject" is part of a Lacanian/Althusserian tradition focusing on interpellation and misrecognition (Lapsley and Westlake 1-8). Subjects are at least in part defined by ideological conditions. This premise is highly contested, but, as Judith Mayne has argued, "[t]he study of spectatorship in film theory has always involved some complicated negotiations of 'subjects' and 'viewers,' despite claims that the two are incompatible terms" (9). The complex interplay of these ideas can be partly clarified, however, by adaptation's "laboratory" conditions.

² Translating Shakespearean text into cinematic imagery is perhaps the most frequent example. Such translations suppress Shakespeare's enunciating presence in favor of a "seamless" cinematic unfolding, replacing *discours* articulating with *histoire* unfolding. This achieves Colin MacCabe's dictum that in realist cinema "the narrative discourse simply allows reality to appear and denies its own status as articulation" (36), despite the films' overall ostensible foregrounding of that articulation. Instead of Shakespeare's enunciating words challenging realist film's conservative hierarchy of discourses, "[t]he camera tells us what happens—it tells the truth against which we can measure the discourses" (37). Showing rather than verbalizing even a small element of Shakespeare's text therefore reduces at least that element which has been translated into *histoire*.

³ To say that the post-structuralist premises upon which this argument is based are contested is an understatement (Bordwell, *Making Meaning*; Žižek) but, as Dudley Andrew (“Adaptation”) has observed, adaptation offers the laboratory conditions to test these premises.

⁴ As early as the second decade of the twentieth century scriptwriters were making the case that they should be considered film’s primary creative source (Eisner 39), but the impact of the *politique des auteurs* from the 1950s onward firmly established the director as the focus of critical and theoretical attention. The influence of *auteur* theory, and its concomitant rejection of the creative impact of scriptwriters and source texts, has led film theory to conceive of enunciation in relation to continuity editing and the manipulation of *mise-en-scène*, as an *auteur*-ial rather than an authorial imprint.

⁵ Jonathan Culler, for example, discussing competing definitions of *discours*, *histoire* and *récit*, argues that “Barthes has very nearly reversed the categories while claiming to follow Benveniste’s example” (233). Culler’s contention demonstrates the complexity and potential contradiction within this element of discourse. It does not explain, however, why these competing ideas enter into specific elements of discourse without adequate contextualization.

⁶ It also facilitates an exploration of the ways in which this privileging of authorship intersects with the culture industry. Courtney Lehmann, for example, argues that *Shakespeare in Love*’s romantic (in the contexts of both the Romantic author and the romantic film hero) lead’s “corpus, in all its incarnations—bodily, textual, commercial and critical—returns from the dead to implore us not to love but, rather, to enjoy” (214).

⁷ This focus on the author’s return extends even to Katherine E. Kelly’s analysis of Tom Stoppard’s role as *Shakespeare in Love*’s screenplay writer. Based upon a Barthesian understanding of how Stoppard “uses others’ texts irreverently and ... views all texts as shifting and unstable grounds of meaning,” Kelly argues that such approaches to canonical texts, which “bear directly on Stoppard’s varied uses of Shakespeare,” encourage a Barthesian challenge to canonicity that “provoke[s] the spectator to reconsider the monumentality of Shakespeare-the-icon” (18). Kelly’s understanding of the impact of Barthesian authorship upon *Shakespeare in Love* may be diametrically opposed to Kingsley-Smith’s, Davis and Womack’s, or Burt’s, but it is motivated by the same theoretical bias, and likewise disregards the impact of either Stoppard’s or Shakespeare’s enunciative traces on the film’s transformative work.

⁸ There is a striking similarity here between Derrida’s paradoxically absent enunciating subject and Metz’s understanding of how cinematic images are “made present in the mode of absence” (Metz, “The Imaginary” 410).

⁹ Catherine Belsey’s influential critique of the possibility of exploring Shakespearean pluralism in film contrasts realist cinema’s monocular perspective with “the conditions of Elizabethan staging that emphasize a specific kind of plurality” (61-62).

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